

# Participation Information Statement

## Independent Review of Harassment in the Parliament Workplace

### Office of the Commissioner for Equal Opportunity

Dear Participant,

You are invited to participate in the independent review project outlined below.

#### What is the project about?

The Acting Commissioner for Equal Opportunity has been asked by Parliament to review harassment in the South Australian Parliament, in particular the reporting of harassment and how such reports are responded to. Parliament has requested that recommendations be made to improve response mechanisms and promote a culture that is free from harassment.

The review will focus on sexual harassment and other forms of harassment. This includes harassment on the basis of race, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability and age.

Parliament has not asked the Equal Opportunity Commission to look into issues of harassment and bullying of a general nature.

The review is seeking to gain an understanding of the culture in relation to harassment experienced by those who work in the parliamentary workplace, particularly any barriers to reporting and responding appropriately to reports of harassment.

The review is also aiming to understand the impacts and effectiveness of existing complaints and response pathways for alleged incidents of harassment.

You can view the terms of reference at <https://eoc.sa.gov.au/initiatives/parliament-harassment-independent-review>.

#### Who is undertaking the project?

This review is being conducted by the Acting Commissioner for Equal Opportunity and staff of the Equal Opportunity Commission ('the review team').

The Commissioner for Equal Opportunity is an independent statutory appointment made under the *Equal Opportunity Act 1984* (SA). Emily Strickland is the Acting Commissioner for Equal Opportunity.



### Why am I being invited to participate?

The review is seeking views from anyone who works in the Parliament House precinct. You are being invited to participate in this project as you conduct some or all of your work in Parliament. This includes staff and trainees in electoral offices of House of Assembly Members as these positions are considered extensions of the parliamentary workforce for the purposes of the review.

We would like to hear about your experiences of workplace harassment and the availability, accessibility and/or effectiveness of complaints processes in the Parliament workplace and electoral offices. We value your views on how systems and culture can be improved for the benefit of everyone working at Parliament.

### Do I have to take part in this project?

Participation in the review is voluntary. If you do not wish to take part, you do not have to.

All information provided to the review will be confidential and reporting by the Acting Commissioner for Equal Opportunity will not include identifying information.

### What am I being invited to do?

You are invited to participate in any or all of the three consultation methods forming part of this review. These are:

- > Completing an anonymous online survey that will collect data to inform recommendations about how to improve the culture around and responses to harassment in the parliamentary workplace.
  - You will receive a link to this survey to your work email address<sup>1</sup> during the week starting Monday 7 December 2020.
  - The survey will be open until 31 December 2020.
  - The survey link you are sent will be accessible from your personal or home device.
  
- > Providing a written submission on any aspect of the project's terms of reference, including: your experiences of harassment in the parliamentary workplace; factors you believe contribute to the existence of harassment in this workplace; barriers to reporting harassment in this workplace; how harassment has been dealt with in the past in this workplace; the adequacy of any existing complaints mechanisms; and/or any ideas you have for improving the culture around and reporting of and responding to harassment in the parliamentary workplace.

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<sup>1</sup> Some casual staff may receive this to their home email address.



- You can provide a written submission at any time before 15 January 2021 via email at [parliamentEOCreview@sa.gov.au](mailto:parliamentEOCreview@sa.gov.au) or by post to  
*Parliament Review Team  
 Equal Opportunity Commission  
 GPO Box 464  
 Adelaide SA 5001*
- > Participating in an interview to share your story and/or provide information on any aspect of the project's terms of reference.
  - Interviews will be conducted by the Equal Opportunity Commission review team from the week starting Monday 14 December. To register your interest in participating in an interview, please email [parliamentEOCreview@sa.gov.au](mailto:parliamentEOCreview@sa.gov.au) or phone 08 8303 0266.
  - We will discuss with you the best place to meet to conduct the interview.

### What will happen to information about me?

By participating in the review, you consent to the review team collecting and using information about you for the purposes of the Independent Review of Harassment in the Parliament Workplace. We will store information in a secure manner and in accordance with the *State Records Act 1997 (SA)*.

The online survey is completely anonymous – you will not be asked to provide your name or other contact details at any stage during the survey questionnaire.

The information you provide in written submissions and/or interviews will not be identifiable or attributable to you in the final report. If we want to include a de-identified case study that contains information you have provided, we will consult with you first and you can tell us not to include it in the final report.

It is important to know that incidences of harassment disclosed during the review process will not be investigated as part of the review. The review is looking at systemic workplace issues and solutions.

### What are the possible benefits to participation?

If you choose to participate in the review your views will be considered by the Equal Opportunity Commission in formulating recommendations for improving the systems and culture of the parliamentary workplace. This is an opportunity to contribute to changing how sexual and other forms of harassment are responded to in your workplace, and to creating a workplace free from these behaviours.

### Are there any risks involved in participating in the project?

If you decide to take part in the review, you will be asked about aspects of your experiences with harassment in the parliamentary workplace. Being asked and answering these questions may trigger difficult memories for you.

If you decide to take part in the review and during or after your participation you find the memories are causing you distress, counsellors are available through:



- **Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP)** – find your EAP provider on our website [here](#)
- **Lifeline** 131 114 (24 hours, personal crisis service)
- **1800RESPECT** 1800 737 732 (sexual violence service)
- **Yarrow Place** 1800 817 421 (rape and sexual assault service)
- **MensLine Australia** 1300 789 978 (men’s service)
- **QLife** 1800 184 527 (LGBTI service)
- **Beyondblue** 1300 224 636 (depression, anxiety and suicide prevention service)

**How will I find out the outcomes of the review?**

The final report of the Independent Review of Harassment in the Parliament Workplace will be provided to the Presiding Officers of both Houses of Parliament to be tabled in Parliament. The report will be shared on the Equal Opportunity Commission website after the report is tabled in Parliament.

**What if I have further questions about my involvement?**

More information can be found on our website [here](#). We will keep this page updated as the project progresses.

If you require an interpreter or have any other accessibility requirements please contact the review team on the details below so we can arrange these for you.

If you want any further information about the review process, you can contact the following member/s of the review team:

Review team contact details

<b>Name</b>	Emily Strickland	Melody Stanford	Matthew Sanderson
<b>Position</b>	Acting Commissioner for Equal Opportunity	Policy and Research Officer	Policy and Research Officer
<b>Telephone</b>	08 8303 0266		
<b>Email</b>	<a href="mailto:parliamentEOCreview@sa.gov.au">parliamentEOCreview@sa.gov.au</a>		

**What if I have a complaint about the review?**

If you have a complaint about the review or the way it is being conducted, please contact the Acting Commissioner for Equal Opportunity in the first instance on 08 8303 0266 or at [parliamentEOCreview@sa.gov.au](mailto:parliamentEOCreview@sa.gov.au).

If you remain dissatisfied, you can contact the Ombudsman at <https://www.ombudsman.sa.gov.au/>.

